

PART I

NARRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Sanitary Subsurface Disposal (GP)

A. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Eligibility

- a. The category of dischargers which can be authorized on a state-wide basis under this “T1” general permit are those which discharge sanitary wastewater to ground water from facilities using subsurface sewage disposal systems, i.e. “septic systems”, whose aggregate daily design flow, determined in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:9A, is in excess of 2,000 gallons per day (GPD) per single property. These septic systems receive and treat sanitary sewage and dispose only sanitary wastewater.
- i. Sanitary sewage is defined at N.J.A.C. 7:14A-1.2 and means “any liquid waste containing animal or vegetable matter in suspension or solution, or water carried wastes resulting from the discharge of water closets, laundry tubs, washing machines, sinks, dishwashers or any other source of water carried wastes of human origin or containing putrescible material.” This term specifically excludes industrial, hazardous or toxic wastes and materials. However, this permit does allow for the responsible use and discharge of commonly used cleaning compounds that may enter the septic system.
- ii. Examples of septic systems which may qualify for this permit include septic tanks with seepage pits, disposal fields, leach or tile fields (or an equivalent distribution mechanism); pit latrines; cesspools; dry wells; injection wells and infiltration galleries. These may be regulated under a general permit as they involve the same or substantially similar operations with respect to the nature of the discharge activity, discharge the same type of wastes and engage in similar disposal practices, require the same operating conditions and standards for disposal, require the same monitoring and/or inspections of the system as a first defense against threat to human health and the environment and, in the opinion of the Department are more appropriately controlled under a general permit than under separate, individual permits.

2. Request For Authorization

- a. An RFA consists of a standard NJPDES-1 application form, a topographic map depicting the location of the facility, and a plot plan.
 - i. A facility which has submitted a complete application for an individual discharge to ground water permit in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7: 14A-4 or its regulatory precursors may, at the discretion of the Department, be authorized under this general permit without submission of a specific request for authorization (RFA). A complete application is considered to be the RFA.
 - ii. The decision to issue an authorization shall be based upon the applicability of the criteria, outlined below, to each individual facility. If it is determined that the facility meets the outlined criteria, the Department may notify the permittee regarding the authorization under this general permit in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.13.

3. Automatic Renewal of Authorization

- a. Renewal of this authorization shall be automatic upon reissuance of the permit provided the authorized discharge continues to meet the eligibility criteria. The most recently submitted RFA shall be considered a timely and complete RFA. However, if the information provided in the RFA is no longer accurate, a new RFA must be submitted.

B. SPECIFIC AUTHORIZATION CRITERIA

Sanitary Subsurface Disposal (GP)

1. Facilities can qualify for and be authorized under this general permit upon demonstrating conformance with the following criteria:

- a. The septic systems were designed and approved in accordance with either N.J.A.C. 7:9A- 1 et seq., (Standards for Individual Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems) or its regulatory precursors; or by the NJPDES or Treatment Works Programs of the Department.
- b. The septic systems were in conformance with the rules, regulations and ordinances in effect at the time of construction and construction was performed in conformance with a valid local or state issued approval.
 - i. For facilities with existing individual NJPDES permits, the permittee must demonstrate compliance with the individual permit prior to being considered eligible for a TI permit.

C. SPECIFIC OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

1. Inspection and Maintenance Requirements

- a. Within ninety (90) calendar days of the effective date of the authorization, the permittee shall develop an Inspection Schedule which, at a minimum, fulfills the requirements below. A sample of a generic inspection log is included with the permit to aid in the development of each permittee's individual plan. It incorporates a monthly inspection log, a phone list and examples of priority actions to be undertaken in emergency situations. However, the permittee may choose any organized method of recordkeeping.
- b. Inspection practices will encourage the permittee to assess the usage of the septic systems and to implement efficient operations to ensure proper maintenance. Locations of all septic tanks and disposal areas must be detailed on a site plan that is kept on-site. This plot plan must be completed within one year of authorization (or reauthorization). The following guidelines shall be used when developing and implementing the Inspection Schedule.
 - i. For continuously operating systems, inspections shall be made at a minimum frequency of monthly. For systems operated seasonally, at least one inspection must be made each month (or parts of months) of operation.
 - ii. The permittee must educate all appropriate personnel as to the contents and procedures regarding the Inspection Schedule to ensure proper implementation. A written record must be kept on site which details the name and title of each employee who has been trained and the dates of their training. A refresher training session must also be held every 2 years.
 - iii. A visual inspection of the septic system may include, but is not limited to, all septic tanks, pumps, siphons, distribution boxes, and disposal fields. It is the permittee's responsibility to determine what appurtenances to include in their inspection, as access may vary from site to site. At a minimum, the immediate surroundings of the disposal areas shall be inspected for evidence of malfunctioning or hydraulic failure. Said evidence may include, but is not be limited to, breakout, ponding, wet areas, odors and an overabundance or loss of vegetative cover. If the aforementioned evidence is discovered, the permittee shall assess the situation and determine if hydraulic failure has occurred and take appropriate action. Septic tanks must be inspected for solids accumulation and pumped at least once every 5 years (typically a septic tank will fill with solids every 3 to 5 years and require pumping). The permittee shall keep detailed records, such as the pumping and inspection sample log, of these inspections. These records shall be made available to the Department upon request.
- c. When the inspection of the septic system identifies that maintenance is required to ensure continued proper operation of the system (other than hydraulic failure which is described in 2a. below), said maintenance must be performed without delay. Within 48 hours, the permittee shall document the maintenance need and determine the course of action that will be taken to address the problem.

2. Compliance With Rules

- a. The permittee shall comply with any other applicable federal, state and local rules, regulations and

ordinances. The issuance of this permit shall not be considered as a waiver from any of these other requirements.

3. Closure

- a. When closing or abandoning any septic system, the permittee must contact their respective regional enforcement office for guidance.

4. Contingency Requirements

- a. The operation of a septic system shall, at no time, create an unpermitted discharge to any surface water body. Therefore, if the inspection indicates the disposal area is failing hydraulically (e.g. the ground becomes saturated and/or clogged and can no longer absorb effluent or the seepage pits/dry wells become full so that effluent no longer infiltrates properly), the permittee must:
 - i. Immediately cease discharge to the affected disposal area.
 - ii. Contact the Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control (BNPC) at (609) 292-0407 as well as the respective enforcement bureau (see E.I.c.vii. for listings) to report the failure as soon as possible after it is observed.
 - iii. Determine the probable cause of hydraulic failure.
 - (1) If the cause was unintentional overloading of the disposal area due to unequal distribution of the discharge or heavy rain, snow melt, etc., the permittee shall not resume discharging until the affected disposal area drains and returns to operational status.
 - (2) If the system is undersized for the given flow or is physically clogged, then the discharge shall not resume until an approved measure has been taken to rectify the situation.
- b. The following remedial work does not require any approvals from the NJDEP or from any local authorities (however the BNPC must be notified in writing):
 - i. The replacement of worn, damaged, defective or inoperable wastewater pumps, septic tanks, disposal areas, and associated components, providing that the capacity and location will not change.
 - ii. Rehabilitation or the replacement of existing sewer lines.
 - iii. Work beyond this scope will require a treatment works approval and the NJDEP Bureau of Engineering should be contacted prior to initiating any remedial work not covered under 1 and 2 above (Northern facilities at 609-292-6894 / Southern facilities at 609-984-6840).
- c. PLEASE NOTE: A properly functioning septic system under normal operations does not require frequent pumping of the septic tank(s). For example, pumping wastewater from the septic tank on a weekly, or even a monthly basis should not be necessary to enable the disposal area to manage the desired hydraulic load or to avoid hydraulic failure. Therefore, long term hauling is not an acceptable means of sanitary wastewater disposal. In addition, a properly functioning septic system does not need "performance enhancing" chemical or biological additives in the septic tank or the disposal system. However, use of these additives is not prohibited provided you contact the Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control for guidance and written approval prior to introducing any chemical or biological additives to the system.

- i. The permittee should use public informational resources which are available as tools to continually guide and assist in the proper operation and maintenance of their septic system. For example, a helpful 15-page handbook entitled, "A Homeowner's Manual For Septic Systems: A Properly Maintained Septic System Will Last the Lifetime of the Home" (NJDEP / September 1996), is available from the NJDEP, Office of Maps & Publications (609-777-1039). There is no charge for this publication. This Manual also includes the addresses and phone numbers of other sources of information. It should be noted however, that this manual was designed as a guidance document for septic systems serving single family homes but many of the practices referenced in the manual are helpful for other types of systems as well.

D. ADDITIONAL OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

1. Operating Requirements

- a. Prior to any change in ownership or operating entity of the regulated facility, the current permittee shall comply with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 7:14A-16.2. pertaining to notification of change of ownership.
 - i. The permittee shall provide written notification to the Department whenever there is any proposed alteration or addition to the facility that may result in:
 - ii. a change in the nature of the discharge such that it no longer meets the definition of "sanitary sewage" in accordance with N.J.A.C.7: 14-1.2,
 - iii. an increase in the site design volume of sanitary sewage discharged, or planned redistribution of existing flow.
 - iv. These activities may subject said facility to stricter regulatory oversight by the Department. Such oversight can include system expansion, imposition of a discharge and ground water quality monitoring program through issuance of an individual permit or another general permit or other federal, state or local permits or approvals.
 - v. Any planned change, which may result in noncompliance with the permit, must be proposed to the Department for approval prior to implementation.
- b. Based on additional data and information regarding the contravention of the Ground Water Quality Standards, N.J.A.C.7:9-6, the Department reserves the right to revoke a facility's authorization under this permit and regulate a facility under a more appropriate permit document, such as an individual NJPDES permit or authorization under another general permit, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.13 and 16.4.

E. RECORDKEEPING

1. Records

- a. All records of inspections and any necessary maintenance must be retained by the permittee for a minimum of five (5) years. All records shall be made available for inspection by the Department upon request and, whenever possible, kept on-site. These records shall include, but not be limited to, the aforementioned log, pumping or hauling records, receipts for items or substances purchased by the facility and used in the system, etc. In addition, all engineering plans/approvals shall be kept perpetually.
- b. The most recent version of the Inspection Schedule must be retained at all times and kept on-site whenever possible. It should be placed in a common area, such as the facility office and/or maintenance building. For facilities without a common area where the Inspection Schedule must be kept off-site, arrangements must be made to make the documents available to the Department upon request. (The permittee may always make revisions to the plan when necessary.)
 - i. Within ninety (90) days of the EDP of the authorization, the permittee must compile a list of phone numbers to be utilized in the event of an emergency situation. Emergency situations include, but are not limited to; power failure, equipment malfunction, pump failure, ponding effluent or run-off, clogged piping, etc. The emergency phone list shall at a minimum include:

- ii. NJDEP / Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control (609-292-0407)
- iii. Septic Hauler
- iv. Facility Owner
- v. Licensed Operator (if applicable)
- vi. Local Health Department
- vii. NJDEP Regional Bureaus of Water Compliance & Enforcement
Northern Field Office (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex & Warren) (973) 299-7592
Central Field Office (Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean & Union) (609) 584-4200
Southern Field Office (Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester & Salem) (856) 614-3655
- viii. It is suggested these phone numbers, as well as descriptions of emergency situations and the required responses, be placed in a common area such as the facility office or maintenance building.
- ix. The following emergency numbers must also be listed but should be used only in extreme emergencies. The permittee must be able to assess whether the system problem/emergency is critical enough to require these specialized services/agencies. Most system emergencies will not require the intervention of these services. Please consider this in developing the descriptions of emergency situations and required responses, as suggested in the paragraph above. NJDEP Hotline (1-877-WARNDEP/1-877-927-6337), Police / Fire Departments, Gas / Electrical Utilities, Electrician.

F. COMPLIANCE TIMETABLE

1. **As an aid in staying in compliance with the permit, the following summary timetable is presented to denote the time schedule for performing various tasks required throughout the permit. The timetable starts from the Effective Date of Permit Authorization (EDPA), which is located on the separately issued AUTHORIZATION TO DISCHARGE page.**
 - a. Within one month - inspections of the septic systems must begin.
Within 90 days - a detailed inspection record must be created and used for all subsequent inspections.
Within 90 days - an emergency phone list must be compiled.
Within one year - all septic tanks and disposal areas must be identified on a plot plan.
Within one year - training must be provided to individuals conducting the inspections.
Within three years - refresher training must be provided to individuals conducting the inspections (and every two years thereafter).
Within five years - all septic tanks must be pumped and records of such activity maintained.
As soon as possible - the BNPC and your respective enforcement bureau must be contacted if the septic system is failing hydraulically.

G. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. **The following conditions are incorporated by reference. The permittee is required to comply with the rules which were in effect as of the effective date of the final permit.**
 - a. General Permits (N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.13)
 - b. Penalties for Violations - N.J.A.C. 7:14-8.1 et seq.

- c. Consolidation of Permit Processing - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-15.5
- d. Incorporation by Reference - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.3
- e. Enforcement Action - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.9
- f. General Conditions Applicable to All Permittees - N.J.A.C. 7: 14A-6.2 (see also section A.4.c.)
- g. Duty to Reapply - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-4.2(e) (see also section A.4.d.)
- h. Administrative Continuation of Permits - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.8
- i. Duty to Mitigate - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.2(a)5,6.2(a)l
- j. Permit Actions - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.7(c)
- k. Permit Duration and Renewal - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.7(a), (b)
- l. Effect of Permit - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.9(c) ,6.2(a)6&7 (see also section E. 1.)
- m. Inspection and Entry - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.11(c)
- n. Severability - N.J.A.C. 7:1 4A-2.2(b)
- o. Toxic Pollutants - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.2(a)4 (see also section E. 1.)
- p. Standard Reopener Clause - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.2(a)10
- q. General Permits - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.13
- r. Fee Schedule - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-3.1

2. Operation and Maintenance

- a. Proper Operation and Maintenance - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.12(a)
- b. Need to Halt or Reduce not a Defense - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.9(b)
- c. Bypass - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.11
- d. Upset - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.11

3. Records and Reporting Requirements

- a. Record Keeping - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.6
- b. Planned Changes - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.7
- c. Changes in Discharge - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.7
- d. Anticipated Noncompliance - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.7
- e. Transfer - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.2(a)8, 6.13(n), 16.1, 16,2
- f. Compliance Schedules - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.4
- g. Noncompliance Reporting - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-6.10

- h. Duty to Provide Information - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.11, 6.2(a)14
- i. Signatory Requirements - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-4.9
- j. Public Access to Information - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-18.1
- k. Additional Requirements for all Existing Manufacturing, Commercial Mining, Silviculture, and Research Facilities - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-11.3
- l. Missing or Incorrect Information - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-2.11(f), 6.10(e)2 & (f)3
- m. Confidentiality - N.J.A.C. 7:14A-18.2
- n. Copies of the NJPDES rules may be purchased by contacting:
West Group
St. Paul, Minnesota
1-800-808-West
Copies are also available on the Division of Water Quality's website at:
www.state.nj.us/dep/dwq/rules